

SERVICE TO YOUTH

Clubs collaborate to fund, promote and select participants: Youth leadership programs a priority for Iowa City area clubs

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When Linda Farkas joined the Iowa City Noon Rotary Club in 2010, she was asked to run the club's Youth Leadership Programs. At that time, the club was sending one student to RYLA and one student to the World Affairs Seminar each year.

In the past 14 years, Iowa City's Youth Leadership Program has changed drastically. The first change was that the Noon Club partnered with the other clubs in the area (Iowa City AM, Iowa City Downtown, and the Coralville North Corridor Club).

Together, the clubs were able to collaborate on both fundraising for the initiative and on the process of interviewing and selecting students from the area high schools. The results are astounding. In the summer of 2024, the clubs sent 20 students to RYLA and 32 students to the World Affairs Seminar (WAS).

With the belief that many hands make for light work, there are committee co-chairs that take responsibility for the promotion/advertising of the opportunity within a specific high school and then schedule the interviewing and selection of students from specific high schools. An additional 20+ Rotarians from the Iowa City area volunteered their time to interview and select participants.

A team of 10+ Rotarians led the fundraising efforts. The 2024 Youth Leadership program



32 Iowa City area students attended the World Affairs Seminar in Wisconsin

received support from more than 40 individuals and businesses. In addition, several Dine Out evenings have brought in resources from area restaurants. Some funds are paid directly to the club while other funds are paid through the District HEF Fund in order to provide a tax deduction to the donor. As they say, it takes a village to raise a child and this is an example of a village coming together to provide tremendous educational and leadership experiences to area youth.

In August of each year, students from the programs speak to the supporting clubs about their experiences.



This is a favorite meeting for members as it makes you hopeful for our future as these students are intelligent, caring, and insightful.

And it is a reminder of why we are all Rotarians – so that we can have a positive impact on our world.

World Affairs Seminar participants share their experiences at Rotary club meetings